

SCIENTIFIC MISSIONS AT ANTARCTIC LAKE OVERRIDDEN BY NSA?

The first item below is allegedly a Jet Propulsion Laboratory press release (ref. 01-24), but we are unable to confirm its authenticity. If anyone has further details, please contact us. The second item comes via www.cyberspaceorbit.com. Ed.

"In a brief announcement today [21 February], NASA and the JPL terminated all further study of Lake Vostok in S. Antarctica.

"In an apparent slip of confidentiality, spokeswoman Debra Shingteller alluded to 'national security issues' allowing the NSA [US National Security Agency] to assume full control of what had been an international effort to explore a huge under-ice lake near the Russian Vostok research station.

"Ms Shingteller was immediately led away from the podium, and an aide responded to the many further questions with the same answer—"the project has been halted due to environmental issues" and no further releases were pending.

"The large crowd of press corps were left clamoring as the officials left the stage. Ms Shingteller has not responded to repeated attempts at contact."

The above is a report from an official JPL PR rep who attended the announcement. The following is part of a



letter written to an editor of *Scientific American* (who has requested anonymity). The linked photo [see cyberspaceorbit.com website] was released by NASA in January 2001, seemingly by mistake. It is no longer available from the official archive.

"Approximately 300 miles from the South Pole there is a lake, a very large lake. It is Lake Vostok. It is also located over ¼ mile beneath the continental ice sheet. The best photos of Lake Vostok are from space, where the outline is clearly visible. Current ice-penetrating radar studies indicate that the water is up to 2,000 feet deep in places, and has an over-arching dome up to ½ mile high.

"Estimates for filtered light at the lake surface indicate something like 'continuous first morning light' during Antarctica's summer months. Thermograph imaging proposes an amazing 50-degree average water temperature with 'hot spots' near 65 degrees. This can only be attributed to subsurface geothermal heat sources. At 300 miles long and 50 miles wide, the encapsulated atmosphere should have the ability to cleanse itself through interaction with the lake and possibly plant life.

"Also proposed as a possible route for atmospheric interaction with the lake's environment are what are being labeled 'geothermal boils'. These are thousands of bubbles in the ice sheet, located in the some 200 sq. miles of 'ice dunes' discovered by

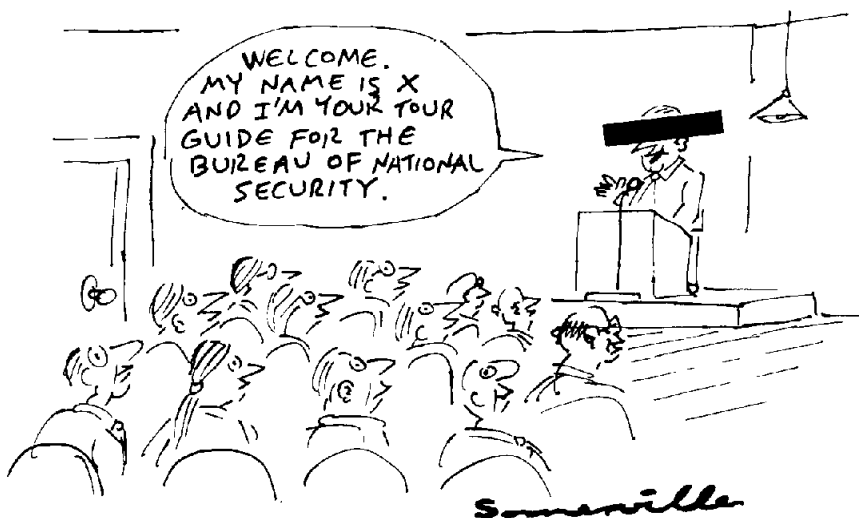
the late Russian scientist Ivan Toskovoi, who was stationed at Vostok research base until his disappearance in March 2000. The surveyed bubbles range from a few to several hundred feet in diameter.

"Quite possibly just as exciting as all of the data related so far, is the discovery through magnetic imaging that there is an extremely powerful source of magnetic energy located at the north end of the lake's shoreline. As of this writing, no one has suggested an explanation for the magnetic 'anomaly'.

"As recently as February 2000, at least two international teams were planning separate probes of the lake. Both consisted of fairly similar robotic sensors that would have been lowered through shafts (to be drilled). The teams, based at Cambridge University, London [*sic.*], were sponsored by the UK and US governments and backed by NASA technology.

"For reasons not clear, both programs have been shelved indefinitely, with NASA going so far as to deny any involvement, and both governments citing 'environmental concerns'. An independent source that visited Norway's research base some 150 miles to the East stated that a large amount of new equipment and personnel have been arriving at Russia's Vostok station over the last six months. This is interesting, considering Russia's current financial situation.

"A final note is a verified dispatch out of Casey Station (AU). The pair of women adventurers who were attempting to ski across the continent last month and were



extracted by plane during the last leg of their trip, did *not* request the intervention.

"Over the protests of the Australian crew at Casey, the two were airlifted via an extraordinary 48-hour flight by a USN Special Forces team out of American Samoa.

"According to the dispatch, the women were insistent on reporting something unusual they had seen. The latest news reports have the pair resting in 'seclusion'." (Sources: Various websites, including www.cyberspaceorbit.com/antmag.html and NASANews@hq.nasa.gov)

MOBILE PHONE RADIATION LINKED TO EYE CANCER

Mobile phones have been linked to human cancer in a scientific study for the first time. The research, which suggests there is a threefold increase in eye cancers among people who regularly use the device, was carried out by a team from the University of Essen, in Germany.

The team investigated a form of eye cancer called uveal melanoma, in which tumours form in the layer that makes up the iris and base of the retina. The results were published in the journal *Epidemiology*.

Dr Andreas Stang, who led the research, said he had examined 118 people with uveal melanoma and obtained details about their use of digital mobile phones. This was compared with a control group of 475 people without the disease.

The mechanism by which the radiation might cause cancer is uncertain, but it is known that the watery content of the eye assists the absorption of radiation.

(Source: *The Times, London, 14 Jan 2001*)

PAEDIATRICIANS TEST ADULT DRUGS ON CHILDREN

Mary Robinson, a Philadelphia X-ray technologist, received US\$300 and a \$50 Toys 'R' Us gift certificate as an incentive to enrol her seven-month-old daughter in a drug trial to treat a form of indigestion babies can get. Merck & Co., the maker of the medicine, also received an incentive: about US\$290 million. That's the estimated revenue Merck will pocket from the six months of additional marketing exclusivity it has won.

Merck's drug, Pepcid, was slated to lose its patent protection last October, opening the way to low-priced generic competition. But, as a reward for conducting the first

formal studies of Pepcid in infants, the US Federal Government has given Merck a half-year of extra protection from generics.

And the gains are even greater for some of the other companies rushing to take advantage of a 1997 law meant to encourage paediatric trials of adult medicines.

That law, by giving drug makers an incentive to test on children, is producing important new prescribing information for paediatricians, the Food and Drug Administration says. Labels have been changed on 14 drugs to reflect new data. Some paediatricians are delighted with the results and are lobbying to extend the law past its scheduled expiration at year's end.

But a close look at the law shows that it is also producing an unintended consequence: a drug-industry financial bonanza. (Source: *Wall Street Journal, NY, 5 Feb 2001, <http://interactive.wsj.com/articles/>*)

PHONE TOWERS ARE NOW A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE

In the UK, two landmark decisions by the Planning Inspectorate have endorsed decisions by planning authorities to refuse the installation of phone masts on the grounds of public fears about health hazards. The Inspectorate has thrown out two separate appeals by phone companies against refusals based on public concern about health risks. It is the first time inspectors have ruled that anxiety about the possible adverse health effects of masts is a material consideration.

An inspector, upholding the London

Borough of Harrow's refusal to permit an Orange phone mast in a residential area in Stanmore, said: "There is justification for the council's view that residents' anxiety about the health effects of the appeal installations materially contributes to the general loss of amenity."

Planning Minister Nick Raynsford wrote to councils last summer, advising them to ignore health issues when determining mast applications if they met international radiation guidelines.

But Alan Meyer, legal advocate to lobby group Mast Action UK, said the decisions would give authorities a reason to ignore Raynsford's advice, which he believes violates the Human Rights Act.

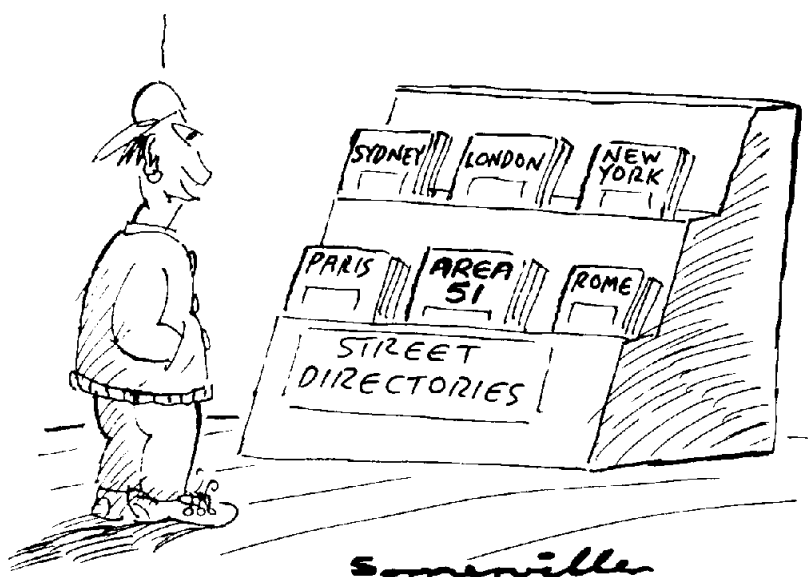
"The Inspectorate, unlike Raynsford, is doing what the law requires. It is respecting the European Convention on Human Rights article 8, right to respect for family life, and article 6, right to a fair and proper hearing," Meyer said.

RTPI spokesman David Rose said: "These decisions will put new pressure on authorities to refuse masts. But it's barmy to leave them to judge the safety of each individual mast. The government needs to assess if they are safe."

(Source: *The Journal of the Royal Town Planning Institute, UK, 16 February 2001*)

DRUG TRIALS IN AUSTRALIA LACK PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

Thousands of Australian patients are being used as guinea pigs in drug trials for global pharmaceutical companies



without explicit laws to protect their rights.

Intellectually disabled men and women, incapable of giving consent on their own behalf, are being included in the trials which are largely aimed at getting new drugs to the US and European markets.

Pharmaceutical companies are paying private doctors up to A\$6,000 for every patient they recruit, but patients don't have to be told of the financial arrangement.

The number of drug trials being conducted in Australia has risen 20-fold since 1990, and many never result in approval for the drug being trialled. Some trials are abandoned after reports of side-effects and deaths, either here or overseas, or because the drug simply does not work.

A *Sydney Morning Herald* investigation found that the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) was obliged to review directly only two of the 1,712 clinical trials done in Australia last year.

Trials have included experiments on dementia patients, the testing of hormone creams on menopausal women, and the administration of new vaccines in children.

Professor John Simes, director of the National Health and Medical Research Council's clinical trial centre, says the lack of a publicly accessible central trials register in Australia means that there is no accurate way of knowing what trials are being done and by whom.

Global pharmaceutical companies have rushed to Australia at a time when debates

have arisen over similar trials in Europe and the USA, and because of the relative cheapness and ease of getting approval.

(Source: The Sydney Morning Herald, 13 February 2001, www.smh.com.au)

TRACK AND CONTROL YOUR CAR WITH GPS & THE INTERNET

Houston-based Immobiliser Inc. is introducing the world's first over-the-counter wireless vehicle tracking and control system using both the Internet and Global Positioning System (GPS) technology.

The new product, called GPS Vision, will allow vehicle owners from anywhere in the world to be able to track and control their vehicle over the Internet. It has the power to track and control a vehicle with just the click of a mouse. Car owners receive the vehicle's street address location, digital mapping, car speed and direction in seconds via the Internet.

Doors can be remotely unlocked or locked, the engine can be turned on or off, and you can even be notified via pager/cellphone if your car alarm is activated—all from anywhere in the world. The next time your car is stolen, you can dial it up on your cellphone, obtain its location, relay this info to the police, then turn off the car engine, lock the doors and wait.

(Source: *Wireless Developer Network*, 5 February 2001, www.wirelessdevnet.com/news/2001/35/news5.html)

THE ECONOMIC RATIONALISM OF FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE

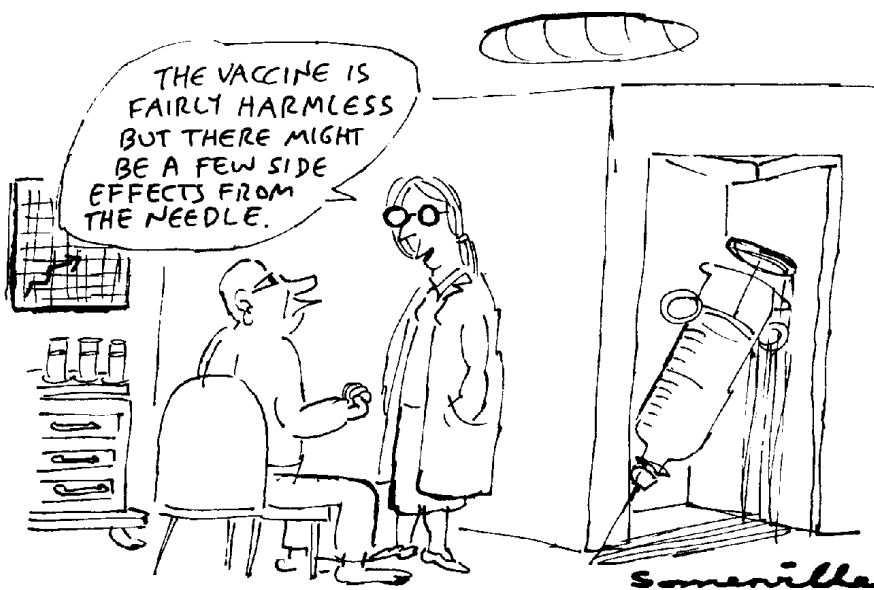
Abigail Wood, a vet and researcher for the Wellcome Trust at the University of Manchester, says that foot-and-mouth disease "is as serious to animals as a bad cold is to human beings" and asks, "So why the concern?"

"Foot-and-mouth has gained a grip on this nation—and fear of the disease seems as powerful as the disease itself. We recognise foot-and-mouth not by its symptoms, but by what we do to control it: the restrictions on movement, the slaughter of animals, the burning of carcasses. From the panic and the headlines, you would imagine that this is a most dreadful disease. Yet foot-and-mouth very rarely kills the animals that catch it. They almost always recover, and in a couple of weeks at that. It almost never gets passed on to humans, and when it does it is a mild infection only. The meat from animals that have had it is fit to eat. In clinical terms, foot-and-mouth is about as serious, to animals or to people, as a bad cold.

"Why, then, the concern? And why the policy of wholesale slaughter? The concern, of course, is economic. This is a financial issue, not an animal welfare issue nor a human health one. No one abroad will take our meat if it might be infected with foot-and-mouth. And that worldwide exclusion zone stems from British policies of the past. It was we who, in the late 19th century, decided that foot-and-mouth should not be lived with, but should be eliminated, shut out through the *cordon sanitaire*; it was we, in the 1950s, who encouraged first the Continent, then the rest of the world, into following suit. Now it is we who must live with the results of that policy.

"Foot-and-mouth disease does reduce the productivity of an animal: its milk yield, its rate of putting on of flesh. There are no figures for how much it reduces these things; part of the reason for that is that no one since the 1920s in Britain has seen the disease take its full course. Any animal infected with it has been immediately slaughtered. That reduction in productivity, that fear of small economic loss, is what lies behind the elimination policy—and the huge economic costs that are now being incurred.

"It need not have been like that. The animal control policy was the result of economics rather than biology. Under



conditions of world trade now, it is a decision almost impossible to reverse." (Source: The Times, London, 1 March 2001. The author, Abigail Woods, is currently a Wellcome Trust-funded MSc student at the Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine at Manchester University, UK. She qualified as a vet in 1996.)

SPIDER SILK FROM GOAT MILK: A GENETIC NIGHTMARE

In a concrete bunker on a mothballed Air Force base in Plattsburgh, New York, two Nigerian dwarf goats named Mille and Muscade joyfully munch grass and slurp water. Oddly, they are protected from intruders by security guards and razor wire.

Only 20 weeks old, these sister beasts warrant tight security because their milk is highly prized by the US military. Their 70,000-gene chromosomes have been manipulated to include a gene from the orb weaver, a small spider that spins the world's toughest natural material. Researchers are "growing" the spider's silk inside Mille and Muscade's mammary glands.

These strands of silk, just three microns thick, are three times as tough as DuPont's bulletproof Kevlar. A woven cable as thick as your thumb can bear the weight of a jumbo jet. Once perfected, the silk will be used for featherweight ballistic vests, medical sutures and artificial ligaments.

The goats represent a new avenue in the controversial field of transgenics, the science of splicing one species' genes onto the genome of another. By injecting the orb weaver gene into the father of Mille and Muscade, Nexia Biotechnologies bred she-goats whose mammary glands are able to produce the complex proteins that make up spider silk. Their milk looks and tastes like the real thing, but once its proteins are filtered and purified into a fine white powder, they can be spun into tough thread.

Jeffrey Turner, the molecular geneticist behind the goat gambit and CEO of the publicly held Nexia Biotechnologies, got the idea while teaching at McGill University in Montreal in 1992, after learning that scientists had isolated three spider genes that code for silk proteins.

"It was a purely serendipitous find. The silk gland of spiders and the milk gland of goats are almost identical. Teats equal spinnerets."

(Source: Forbes Global, 19 February 2001, www.forbes.com/global/2001/0219/061.html)

THE PORT ARTHUR MASSACRE: SIGNS OF A CONSPIRACY?

The debate over whether the tragic Port Arthur Massacre was part of a conspiracy to usher-in Federal gun laws in Australia has taken a dramatic turn. Prior to going to print with this issue in early March, we made contact with Andrew MacGregor, researcher and collator of information scheduled for public release in late March. It is important to note that this entire information release effort has been instigated by several survivors—in particular, Wendy Scurr, who was working at the Information Centre that day. It was Wendy Scurr who phoned the police and ambulance emergency numbers and held the phone out the door so that the disbelieving police officer could hear for himself the gunfire and chaos. It is clear from examining MacGregor's research (a sampling of which follows) that many unanswered questions remain regarding the actual events at Port Arthur, Tasmania, on Sunday 28 April 1996. Ed.

Most Australians are only vaguely aware of the events that occurred at Port Arthur that fateful Sunday. We have been told that a gunman armed with a Colt AR15 semi-automatic rifle fired 29 rounds inside the Broad Arrow Café at Port Arthur, killing 20 and wounding another 12 of the approximately 60 people inside the café. It is also stated that the killer fired 17 shots, killing 12 and wounding another five victims in the first 15 seconds. The gunman then changed magazines and left the café, still firing the Colt AR15 until he changed firearms to a Belgian FN assault rifle and continued his assault, killing four and wounding five at the Port Arthur Historic Site carpark area.

The gunman then drove towards the tollbooth, where he murdered Mrs Mikac and her two children, and then, at the tollbooth, stole a BMW after murdering the four occupants and shooting at other cars and their occupants who came upon the scene.

The gunman then drove a short distance to the Port Arthur Service Station/General Store and kidnapped Glen Pears and murdered his companion, Zoe Hall. The gunman then drove north along the Arthur Highway and parked the BMW just off the highway, outside the entrance to Seascope Cottage.

The BMW was next reportedly seen by John Rooke, who saw the vehicle diverge across the Arthur Highway and park outside the Seascope Cottage, and then saw the gunman start shooting at passing traffic. The gunman shot at six different vehicles as they passed the Seascope driveway, seriously wounding two persons, Linda White and Carol Williams (the wife of a Canadian Embassy official), with others receiving lesser injuries, mainly from broken glass, before withdrawing to the Seascope Cottage to prepare for the coming police siege.

The following morning, Martin Bryant was arrested naked, after he had fled from a fiery Seascope Cottage unarmed, dressed in black and with his clothes alight. After he had fled the burning building, he vanished from view for a time while he removed his burning clothing. This supposed gunman had left his armoury behind.

A total of 35 died and 22 were injured during the entire incident, including at Seascope Cottage. However, Wendy Scurr and some of the survivors tell a very different story and raise other questions:

- Who lured the only two local policemen on duty to a remote location on the pretext of finding a heroin cache? It was not Martin Bryant.
- Why was the shootout considered a terrorist attack? It was at 1715 hours that the Tasmania Police phoned the Victoria Police, requesting immediate assistance for a terrorist attack. On the basis that the Tasmania Police had established that there was more than one shooter, the National Crisis Centre was notified at 1719 hours.
- Why was ASIO present in a State jurisdiction for a "crazed gunman"? ASIO showed no presence at the Hoddle Street and Queen Street massacres in Melbourne.
- Why was the Tasmania Police held back from attending the site for six hours? All this, while local volunteers there were assisting the wounded and stricken.
- Above all, why does the official version continually differ significantly from the statements, the video evidence and eyewitness testimony?

(Source: Extracted/edited from Andrew MacGregor's CD-ROM research compilation, Deceit and Terrorism: The Massacre at Port Arthur. Andrew MacGregor served in the Victoria Police for 17 years and was awarded the National Service Medal in 1985. He has no involvement with firearms or firearms organisations. The CD-ROM is available from 2012 Unlimited, PO Box 157, North Hobart, Tasmania 7002, Australia, telephone 041 988 2012 [Aust. only], website www.2012.com.au.)